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## The Simple Life

By CHARLES WAGNER

salated From the French by Mary

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Let us pass at last to things simpler still; I mean the little details of housestill; I mean the little details of house-keeping which many young people of our day find so unpoetical. Their contempt for material things, for the humble cares a house demands, arises from a confusion very common, but none the less unfortunate, which comes from the belief that beauty and poetry are within some things, while others lack them; that some occupations are distinguished and agreeable, such as cultivating letters, playing the harp, and tinguished and agreeable, such as culfi-vating letters, playing the harp, and that others are menial and disagree-able, like blacking shoes, sweeping and watching the pot boil. Childish error! Neither harp nor broom has anything to do with it. All depends on the hand in which have restread to the in which they rest and the spirit that moves it. Poetry is not in things; it is in us. It must be impressed on ob-jects from without, as the sculptor im presses his dream on the marble. If our life and our occupations remain too often without charm in spite of any outward distinction they may have it is because we have not known how to put anything into them. The height of art is to make the inert live and to tame the savage. I would have our young girls apply themselves to the development of the truly feminine art of giving a soul to things which have none. The triumph of woman's charm is in that work. Only a woman knows how to put into a home that indefinable something whose virtue has made the poet that the post that the post to relieve and is glad." They say there are no such things as fairles or that there are fairles no longer, but they know not what they say. The original of the fairies sung by poets was found and is still among those amiable mortals who knead bread with energy, mend rents with cheerfulness, nurse the sick with smiles, put witchery into a ribbon and

genius into a stew.

It is indisputable that the culture of the fine arts has something refining about it and that our thoughts and acts are in the end impregnated with that which strikes our eyes. But the exercise of the arts and the contemplation of their products are restricted privileges. It is not given to every one to possess, to comprehend or to create fine things. Yet there is a kind of fine things. Yet there is a kind of ministering beauty which may make its way everywhere—the beauty which springs from the hands of our wives and daughters. Without it what is the most richly decorated house? A dead dwelling place. With it the barest home has life and brightness. Among the forces capable of transforming the will and increasing happiness there is perhaps none in more universal use than this beauty. It knows how to shape itself by means of the crudest tools in the midst of the greatest difficulties. When the dwelling is cramped, the purse limited, awelling is cramped, the purse limited, the table modest, a woman whe has the gift finds a way to make order, finess and convenience reign in her house. She puts care and art into everything she undertakes. To do well what one has to do is not in her eyes he privilege of the rich, but the right

of all. That is her aim, and she knows how to give her home a dignity and an attractiveness that the dwellings of princes, if everything is left to mercenaries cannot recover. princes, it everything is left to mer-cenaries, cannot possess.

Thus understood life quickly shows itself rich in hidden beauties, in at-tractions and satisfactions close at hand. To be oneself, to realize in one's natural place the kind of beauty which is fifting there—this is the ideal. How natural place the kind of beauty which is fitting there—this is the ideal. How the mission of woman broadens and deepens in significance when it is summed up in this: To put a soul into the inanimate and to give to this gracious spirit of things those subtle and winsome outward manifestations to which the most brutish of human beings is sensible! Is not this better than to covet what one has not and to give oneself up to longings for a poor imitation of others' finery?

CHAPTER XII.

CHAPTER XII.

PRIDE AND SIMPLICITY IN THE INTERCOURSE OF MEN.

I would perhaps be difficult to find
a more convincing example than
pride to show that the obstacles to
a better, stronger, serener life are
rather in us than in circumstances.
The diversity and, more than that, the
contrasts in social conditions give rise
inevitably to all sorts of conflicts. Yet,
in spite of this, how greatly would
social relations be simplified if we put
another spirit into mapping out our
plan of outward necessities! Be well
persuaded that it is not primarily differences of class and occupation, differences in the outward manifestations of their destinies, which embroil
men. If such were the case, we should
find an idyllic peace reigning among
colleagues and all those whose interests and lot are virtually equivalent.
On the contrary, as every one knows,
the most violent shocks come when
equal meets equal, and there is no
war worse than civil war. But that
which above all things else hinders
men from good understanding is pride.
It makes a man a hedgehog, wounding
every one he touches. Let us speak
first of the pride of the great.

What offends me in this rich man
passing in his carriage is not his equipage, his dress or the number and splendor of his retinue. It is his contempt.



That he possesses a great fortune does not disturb me, unless I am badly disposed. But that he splashes me with mud, drives over my body, shows by his whole attitude that I count for nothing in his eyes because I am not rich, like himself—this is what disturbs me, and righteously. He heaps suffering upon me needlessly. He humillates and insuits me gratuitously. It is not what is vulgar within me, but It is not what is vulgar within me, but what is noblest, that asserts itself in the face of this offensive pride. Do not accuse me of envy. I feel none. It is my manhood that is wounded. We need not search far to illustrate these ideas. Every man of any acquaintance with life has had numerous experiences which will justify our

dictum in his eyes. In certain communities devoted to material interests the pride of wealth dominates to such a degree that men are quoted like values in the stock market. The esteem in which a man is held is proportionate to the contents of his strong box. Here "society" is made up of big fortunes, the middle class of medium fortunes. Then come people who have little, then those who have nothing. All intercourse is regulated by this principle. And the rela-tively rich man who has shown his disdain for those less opulent is crush-ed in turn by the contempt of his su-periors in fortune. So the madness of comparison rages from the summit to the base. Such an atmosphere is ready to perfection for the nurture of the worst feeling. Yet it is not wealth, but the spirit of the wealthy, that must be arraigned

Many rich men are free from this gross conception—especially is this true of those who from father to son are accustomed to ease-yet they some times forget that there is a certain delicacy in not making contrasts too marked. Suppose there is no wrong in enjoying a large superfluity, is it indispensable to display it, to wound the eyes of those who lack necessities, to flaunt one's magnificence at the doors of poverty? Good taste and a sort of modesty always hinder a well man from talking of his fine appetite, his sound sleep, his exuberance of spirits, in the presence of one dying of consumption. Many of the rich do not exercise this tact and so are greatly wanting in pity and discretion. Are they not unreasonable to complain of envy after having done everything to

But the greatest lack is that want of discernment which leads men to ground their pride in their fortune. To begin with, it is a childish confusion of thought to consider wenith as a person-al quality. It would be hard to find a more ingenuous fashion of deceiving oneself as to the relative value of the container and the thing contained. I have no wish to dwell on this question. It is too painful. And yet one cannot

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esist saying to those concerned: "Take are; do not confound what you possess with what you are. Go learn to know the underside of worldly splendor, that you may feel its moral misery and its puerility." The traps pride sets for us are too ridiculous. We should distrust association with a thing that makes us hateful to our neighbors and robs us of elegences of residents.

robs us of clearness of vision.

He who yields to the pride of riches forgets this other point, the most important of all, that possession is a pub-lic trast. Without doubt individual wealth is as legitimate as individual existence and liberty. These things are inseparable, and it is a dream pregnant with dangers that offers bat-tle to such fundamentals of life. But the individual touches society at every point, and all he does should be done with the whole in view. Possession. then, is less a privilege of which to be proud than a charge whose gravity should be felt. As there is an appren-ticeship, often ticeship; often very difficult to serve, for the exercise of every social office, so this profession we call wealth demands an apprenticeship. To know how to be rich is an art, and one of the least easy of arts to master. Most people, rich and poor alike, imagine that in opulence one has nothing to do but to opulence one has nothing to do but to take life easy. That is why so few men know how to be rich. In the hands of too many wealth, according to the genial and redoubtable comparison of Luther, is like a harp in the hoofs of an ass. They have no idea of the man-

So when we encounter a man at once rich and simple—that is to say, who considers his wealth as a means of ful-filling his mission in the world—we should offer him our homage, for he is surely mark worthy. He has sur-mounted obstacles, borne trials and triumphed in temptations, both gross and subtle. He does not fail to discriminate between the contents of his pocketbook and the contents of his head or heart, and he does not estimate his fellow men in figures. His exceptional position, instead of exalting him, makes him humble, for he is very sensible of how far he falls short of reaching the level of his duty. He has remained a man. That says it all. He is accessible, helpful and far from making of his wealth a barrier to separate him from other men; he makes it a means for coming nearer and nearer to them. Although the profession of riches has been so dishonored by the selfish and the proud, such a man as this alternative. this always makes his worth felt by every one not devoid of a sense of justice. Each of us who comes in contact with him and sees him live is forced to look within and ask himself the ques-tion, "What would become of me in such a situation—should I keep this modesty, this naturalness, this narightness which uses its own as though it belonged to others?" So long as there is a human society in the world, so long as there are bitterly conflicting interas there are outerly connicing interests, so long as envy and egoism exist on the earth, nothing will be worthler of honor than wealth permeated by the spirit of simplicity. And it will do more than make itself forgiven; it will

make itself beloved. More dangerous than pride inspired by wealth is that inspired by power, and I mean by the word every prerogative that one man has over another, be it unlimited or restricted. I see no means of preventing the existence in the world of men of unequal authority. Every organism supposes a hierarchy of powers; we shall never escape from that law. But I fear that if the love of power is so widespread the spirit of power is almost impossible to find. From wrong understanding and misuse of it those who keep even a fraction of authority almost everywhere

succeed in compromising it.

Power exercises a great influence over him who holds it. A head must be very well balanced not to be dis-turbed by it. The sort of dementia wide rule is a universal maindy whose symptoms belong to all times. In evasymptoms belong to all times. In every man there sleeps a tyrant, awaiting only a favorable occasion for wak-ing. Now, the tyrant is the worst enemy of authority, because he furnishes us its intolerable caricature, whence come a multitude of social complications, collisions and hatreds. Every man who says to those dependent on man who says to those dependent on him, "Do this because it is my will and pleasure." does ill. There is within each one of us something that invites us to resist personal power, and this something is very respectable, for at bottom we are equal, and there is no one who has the right to exact obedience from me because he is he and I am I. If he does so his command degrades me and I have no right to sufgrades me, and I have no right to suf-fer myself to be degraded. (To Be Continued.)

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CHILDREN.

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